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ON THE COVER

Super Moon
by Virginia Love

SUPERSTITIONLIVING

Celebrating the joy of living in the foothills of the majestic Superstition Mountains.

JANUARY 2026 ❱ VOL 10 - № 1

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Contact editor@mansurdesign.com for any questions.

DECEMBER 2025

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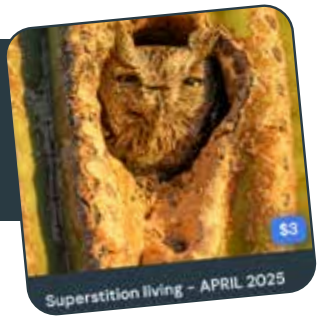

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Article & Photo Submissions Welcome & Encouraged!

Please limit stories to approximately 400 words, and Calendar events to 100 words. You may submit Articles and Events to editor@mansurdesign.com or at the upload form on SuperstitionLiving.com

We are primarily interested in stories directly related to our circulation area. We will run these stories and photos based on space available each month. No guarantee of publication is made.

This is not a platform for complaints or political agenda.

Opinions expressed in editorial or advertisements do not necessarily represent the view or opinion of Mansur Design Co.

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DEADLINES

All editorial, photo and advertising are due by the 10th of each month prior to the month of publication.

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Robin Rotella Team

Happy

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12381 E Ballentine Rd **$649,000**
2459sf, 4br, 3ba, 2cGar + Next Gen Smart Home! Granite, Ext Patio, Hot Tub, Turf & More!

6334 S Vista Point Cir **$600,000**
1871sf, 3br, 2ba, 3cGar + Large 17k sq ft Lot! Split Floorplan, Open Concept Kitchen & More!

6377 S Kiva Circle **$585,000**
1722sf, 3br, 2ba, 2cGar + Updated Kit & Bth, Panoramic Mountain Views & Furnished too!

7145 E Cuernavaco Way **$589,900**
2790sf, 3br, 3.5ba, 2.cGar + Den, 2 Rm Casita, & Includes Exquisite Potato Barn Furnishings!

7119 E San Cristobal Way **$569,900**
2163sf, 3br, 2ba, 2cGar + POOL, Bonus Rm, Private Backyard + Awesome Mountain Views!

18375 E San Ignacio Ct **$550,000**
2912sf, 5br, 3.5ba, 2cGar + Former Model, 1st Flr MBR, Pool, Bonus Room & No Homes Behind!

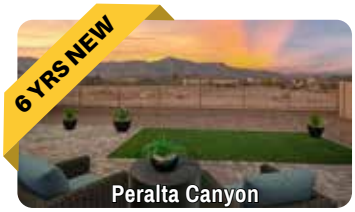
6512 E Hacienda La Noria Ln **$535,000**
1704sf, 3br, 2ba, 2cGar + Pool, Mtn Views New Windows, LVT Floors, Walk-In Shwr+

18019 E La Posada Ct **$500,000**
2439sf, 4br, 2.5ba, 2.5cGar + Wow! High-End Updates t/o & Resort Style Backyard!

4957 S Louie Lamour Dr **$500,000**
1686sf, 3br, 2ba, 2cGar + Den! Open Floor Plan, Mountain View & No Homes Behind!

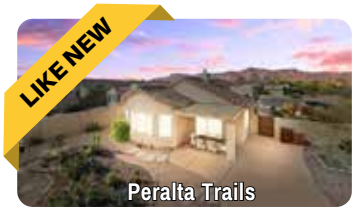
6300 S Eagle Ct **$500,000**
1965sf, 2br, Den, 2ba, 2.5cGar +Large 10k sq ft lot, 2 Bedroom suites, 2 Fireplaces & More!

18115 E Via Jardin **$455,000**
2167sf, 3br, 2ba, 3cGar + Private Tree lined Backyard, Tile Floors t/o & Furnished too!



11626 E Yeager Canyon Dr **$475,000**
1923sf, 4br, 2ba, 2cGar + Mountain View, No Homes Behind, Open FP, Paver Patio & More!

7577 S Towel Creek Dr **$439,900**
1805sf, 4br, 2ba, 2cGar ~ Open Floor plan, Great Value, Hot Tub & Mountain View Lot!

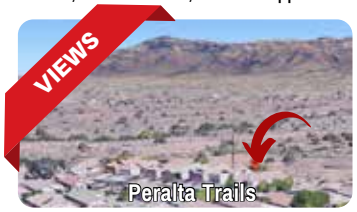


10607 E Hillside Mine Ct **$429,900**
1298sf, 3br, 2ba, 2cGar + Mtn View, New Roof & Floors, Remodeled Kit, Stainless Appl & More!

10725 E Second Water Trail **$415,000**
1521sf, 3br, 2ba, 2cGar + Gorgeous Kitchen, , Granite Ctrs, Tile Floors t/o & no homes behind!

5370 S Desert Dawn Dr, #72 **$399,900**
1531sf, 3br, 2ba, 2cGar ~Perfect Turn Key, Single Level with Fantastic Mountain Views!

18222 E La Posada Ct **$389,900**
2070sf, 3br, 2ba, 3cGar + Huge Open Kit, Lots of Upgrades, Tile Flooring, Mtn Views & More!



10478 E Meandering Trl Ln **$375,000**
1845sf, 3br, 2ba, 2cGar ~ View Fencing, Corner Lot, Great Mountain Views & More!

8588 E Jasper St **$359,900**
1269sf, 3br, 2ba, 2cGar ~ Large Private Yard, No Homes Behind & Mountain Views!

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New Year

Selling Gold Canyon

4126 S Last Chance Trail — **Offered at $720,000**

3020sf, 4br, Den, 2.5ba, 3cSplitGar on ½ Acre! WOW! Beautiful, Quality Home in Prestigious Gated Neighborhood with Stunning, Double Mountain Views (Superstition & Dinosaur) at a GREAT PRICE at $238 per sq foot!!

2466 S Pinyon Village Drive — **Offered at $1,495,000**

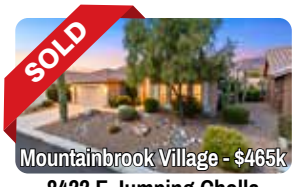
4239sf, 4br, 4.5ba, 3cGar + Den & Bonus Room ~ Stunning Complete Remodel &, Fabulous Furnishings Included! Stunning Sunsets, Amazing Views & More in the Exclusive Superstition Mountain Golf & Country Club!

12580 E Nandina Place — **Offered at $700,000**

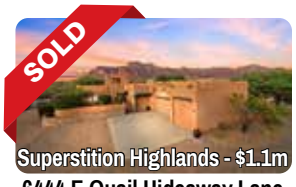
1990sf, 3br, Den, 2ba, 3cGar + Heated Pool & View! Quality Builder, Great Floor Plan, Tasteful Finishes, Upgrades, Landscape & Hardscape & Best Location on Premium Lot with Superstition Mountain View Inside & Out!

5550 S Indigo Drive — **Offered at $675,000**

2432sf, 3br, Den, 3ba, 3cGar including Casita! Wow! Beautiful Home with Newly Expanded Entertainment Patio on 17th Fairway offering Large Pergola, Gorgeous Pavers & Mountain Views + New Roof (2024) & More!



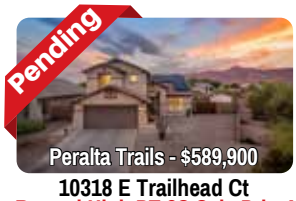
8422 E Jumping Cholla
Sold in Coming Soon Status!
Closed 12/29 ~ Our Seller



6444 E Quail Hideaway Lane
Sold at List Price!
Closed 12/30 ~ Our Seller

7080 E Casa Requena Drive
Sold at 99% of List Price!
Closed 12/30 ~ Our Seller

4308 S Columbine Way
Sold in Coming Soon Status!
Closing 1/9 ~ Our Buyer & Seller



10318 E Trailhead Ct
Record High PT 2S Sale Price!
Closing 1/15 ~ Our Seller

Gold Canyon Market Stats as of December 17, 2025

Gold Canyon ~ Under $500,000
Active, Single Family Homes... 82
Average Active Days on Market... 120
Under Contract... 25
Average Days on Market... 74

Gold Canyon ~ Over $500,000
Active, Single Family Homes... 125
Average Active Days on Market... 125
Under Contract... 15
Average Days on Market... 174

*Source: ARMLS

Call or Text Us Today For Market Update! 480-470-7770

1-26

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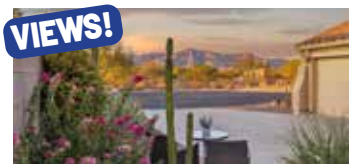
6740 S FAIRWAY DR, MOUNTAINBROOK VILLAGE
Stunning Mountain Views, Golf Course Lot, Open Floor Plan, w/ Den, Extended garage, Many upgrades!

7152 E TEXAS EBONY DR, MOUNTAINBROOK VILLAGE
Furnished plus Golf Cart! 2 bedrooms PLUS DEN, Move-In Ready, Light and Bright, Updated Kitchen, Open Floor Plan, Bonus Arizona Room! 2.5 Car Garage

6123 S VISTA POINT DR, GATED VISTA POINT
Excellent Winter Visitor Retreat, Remodeled Kitchen, 3 bedrms/2 Baths, Many Upgrades, Private Backyard Oasis, Mountain Views

12047 E SERENO ROAD, PERALTA CANYON
Priced under Appraised Value, Incredible Value, Like New, Custom Features throughout, highly upgraded inside & outside, Stunning split floor plan, 4 bedrms, 3 baths, & flexible spaces



10109 E TRAILHEAD COURT, PERALTA TRAILS
Priced to Sell-Stunning Mountain Views, Sunsets and Stargazing Waiting for you! Move in Ready, Open Floor Plan, Private Backyard Oasis! Quiet Cul de Sac

12176 E CHEVELON TRAIL, PERALTA CANYON
Like-New, 3 car garage, Open Floor Plan, Designer Kitchen & Baths, Furnished, 4 Bedrms w/3 baths!

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LOCALEVENTS

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Submissions are due 10th of the month prior
editor@mansurdesign.com

Thursday, Jan 8th, from 6-8pm — Paints & Pints! AJ Parks and Rec is teaming up with Cat Wagon Tap and Bottle for Paints & Pints! Each month will have a different theme for its painting, so no two months are the same! Paints & Pints will begin at 6pm, and it should take about two hours to finish. Registration is $40 and open to anyone 16 years or older. Registration covers all painting supplies and a free drink (pint, wine, soda)! Paints & Pints will be held at Cat Wagon Tap and Bottle, located at 2430 W. Apache Trail #4 in Apache Junction. *Space is limited, so make sure to register online at https://www.apachejunctionaz.gov/111/Parks-Recreation — **Visit the website to see the next event!***

Saturday, Jan 25, from 9am - 4pm the AJ Burro Derby—EVBCH Fun Festival & Hee-Haw Hootenanny | Located at the Lost Dutchman Rodeo Grounds at the foot of the Superstition Mountains you'll find excitement in the legends and lore of days gone by; drawn by the promise of gold, prospectors would pass through town on their way to the hills, either to stake their own claim, or discover the fabled Lost Dutchman's stash. It's here you'll find a historic event of another sort: **the Apache Junction Burro Derby.** Begun in the 1950's, this fun family event is a delight for participants and spectators alike.

For those individuals entered in the race, you can expect a fast, mostly flat course (there are a few small rolling hills) in a loop of 3-5 miles through the desert, starting and ending at the Apache Junction Rodeo Grounds grandstand arena. The race will begin at 10am or shortly after. After the race is over you can enjoy all the fun of the HeeHaw Hootenanny, which includes in hand trail obstacle classes and jackpacking with your donkey (or mule! The race is donkeys only, but the hootenanny is for anything that

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

Events Continue at Boyce Thompson Arboretum, Check the complete event pages on their website at www.btarboretum.org/event or contact the Visitor's Center at 520-689-2723. You may also Email: info@btarboretum.org.

Exciting Activities year round at the Superstition Mountain Museum, Call 480 983-4888 or visit www.superstitionmountainmuseum.org for schedule of classes and events.

Visit Lost Dutchman State Park, Check the website www.azstateparks.com/lost-dutchman/ for a schedule of events and activities. Call 480-982-4485

hee haws!). The race is limited to handlers 14 years old and up, but we will have youth divisions in the in-hand classes. There is no lower age limit to in hand, but small children may need to participate with an adult helper.

For those folks without a long ear, we have plenty of free, family activities, including a stick donkey rodeo, best bray competition, farm games, live music, vendors, and the East Valley Back Country Horseman's yearly gathering. *All of these activities will be open and available from 9 am-4 pm.*

Thursday, Jan 31, from 9am-2pm Cactus lovers Appreciation Day at Smiling Dog Cactus & Succulent Nursery | 10049 E.Cloudview Ave, Gold Canyon. Join us for this Cactus Appreciation Open House on Jan 31st. $5 off any purchase over $30 and a Free hands on cactus propagation class *Registration Required* Email Tom@smilingdoglandscapes.com, to register for class

JANURARY EVENTS AT AJ PUBLIC LIBRARY

1177 N Idaho Rd, Apache Junction, http://www.ajpl.org/

The Mobile Library is Coming to Gold Canyon! Visit AJPL's Mobile Library vehicle at Dinosaur Park in Gold Canyon (5639 S Alameda Rd, Gold Canyon, AZ 85118) every 1st Tuesday of the month from 4-6 PM! While visiting the Mobile Library you can get or renew a library card, check out materials, return materials, access FREE Wi-Fi from the Mobile Library while onsite, & much more! The next scheduled day for your area is **Tuesday, January 6th from 4-6 PM.**

AZ@Work Job Search Help — Now with more days and times! | AZ@Work will be at the library to support patrons with their job search. From resumes to applications to cover letters. **Monday, January 5, 12, 26, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. | Tuesday, January 6, 13, 20, 27 9 a.m.-noon. | Thursday, January 8, 15, 22, 29, 9 a.m.-noon.**

T**uesdays, January 6 – February 3, 2:30 – 3:30p.m. Winter Lecture Series!** Join us to learn about a new topic each week from local experts on the subject!

January 6 —A Century of Filmmaking in Arizona With Historian Jim Turner
January 13 —Urban Wildlife With Nancy Kreuder
January 20 —Drag In Rural Communities With Chris Hall
January 27 —Aremis II Launch With Vaughn Hunter
February 3 —Birds Of Arizona With Vera Walters

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

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NAME(S)_____ DATE:_____

ADDRESS_____ PHONE_____

CITY_____ STATE____ ZIP:_____

EMAIL_____ (For ADOBE Meetings & News Updates)

MAIL APPLICATION TO: ADOBE 6499 S. Kings Ranch Rd. STE 6, Gold Canyon, AZ 85118 Email: *adobegoldcanyon@gmail.com*

A.D.O.B.E. NEWS
GLENNWALP
A.D.O.B.E PRESIDENT

Greetings to All ADOBE Members and Friends

Another year has begun, and with it the anticipation of what remarkable developments may unfold. I extend my sincere wishes to everyone in ADOBE Land and beyond for a happy, healthy, and blessed 2026 despite the uncertainties that inevitably accompany times of change.

Your attention is directed to the January ADOBE Community Meeting, to be held on January 15, 2026, at the Gold Canyon Best Western Hotel. Social time will begin at 6:15 p.m., followed by the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Our principal speaker will be Mr. Jeff Siegel, Director of the Renaissance, who will serve as ADOBE's featured presenter and address all aspects of Renaissance-related traffic. This meeting offers a critical opportunity for community engagement. Attendees are strongly encouraged to bring forward their questions and concerns, as Mr. Siegel will present his perspectives in detail and provide responses. If this issue matters to you, this is the forum in which your voice should be heard.

I would suggest that the only long-term solution to this recurring challenge, notwithstanding ongoing discussions about additional turn lanes on U.S. Route 60, lies in completing State Route 24, which will connect to U.S. Route 60 at the Florence Junction. As Arizona prepares for a gubernatorial election in 2026, it is incumbent upon each of us to thoughtfully support a leader of your choosing who will prioritize meaningful relief for Gold Canyon's increasingly untenable traffic conditions.

From my perspective, our community has been neglected for far too long, receiving little more than explanations and deferrals in response to legitimate concerns. At what point, from either side of the political aisle, do we receive our fair share of infrastructure investment? Waiting until 2050 or 2060 for a solution is, quite frankly, untenable. Our region is expanding at an accelerated pace, and there is no indication that this growth will slow. The notion that we might still be contending with a four-lane corridor through the canyon in 2040-45 defies both logic and responsible planning.

ADOBE will welcome back leaders from Resolution Copper to provide updates on recent developments within their organization at ADOBE's February 2026 Community Meeting, including the impacts of civil suits and possible legislation. Dr. Robert Pappalardo, Superintendent of the Apache Junction Unified School District (AJUSD), will be the presenter at ADOBE's March 2026 Community Meeting. Robert will highlight the district's accomplishments and outline what the community can anticipate in the 2026–27 school year. Under Dr. Pappalardo's leadership, AJUSD has made significant progress, and community members are encouraged to attend the meeting to learn more about these achievements and future initiatives.

The ADOBE Board of Directors extends its sincere gratitude to all who supported ADOBE throughout 2025. Your continued support enables us to represent your interests and, when necessary, advocate vigorously on your behalf as we work to fulfill our mission of fostering a "*better environment*".

Glenn A. Walp, PhD • ADOBE – "*The Voice and Heart of Gold Canyon since 1989*"
Adobegoldcanyon.org

Glenn Walp
President
480-982-2316

Terri Klucar
Membership Chairperson
602-430-1626

Diana Walp
Treasurer
480-982-2316

Lisa Bradford
Secretary
480-238-0786

Rick Hardina
Vice President
480-529-1173

Tuesday, January 6, 6-7 p.m. Cricut For Beginners | If you're curious about the Cricut, or have one at home you haven't taken out of the box yet, come to this class! We will cover the Cricut Joy, Explore, and Maker models from the ground up, from turning the machine on to using Design Space to cut your designs. See the Library's Makerspace Cricut in action, ask plenty of questions, and learn from library staff.

Wednesday, January 7, 3-5 p.m. Cricut Drop-In | Stop by to learn about the Library's Cricut machine, talk about your ideas, or get help with any issues. Drop in anytime between 3-5 on the first Wednesday of every month.

Thursday, January 8, 3 – 5 p.m. Cosplay Club | Craft, Connect, Cosplay! | Ready to bring your favorite characters to life? Connect with other creators, share tips and tricks, and use our tools and resources to craft amazing costumes. All skill levels and ages are welcome.

Thursday, January 8, 5 - 7 p.m. Reading Planners | Create a reading journal for the new year! All supplies will be provided. Choose pages for planning, listing, and reviewing your reading, decorate your planner, and have it bound so it will last you all of 2026.

Monday, January 12, 26, 4:30 – 7:30 p.m. Chess Club | Puzzles, Lessons, and Open Play for all ages and skill levels, with a member of US Team Chess League!

Tuesday, January 13, 6 p.m. Computer Basics | In today's digital world, it is easy to be intimidated by technology. Learn to be more comfortable on the computer. This class is especially designed for beginners with little or no computer experience or those just looking for a refresher course. Class includes:

- Basic computer terminology
- Basic emailing
- How to log on and off
- Attachments
- Using storage devices
- Creating and saving files
- Basic Mouse and keyboarding skills

Wednesday, January 14, 2 p.m. Genealogy Hour | Come spend time learning how to use Family Search and Ancestry

Wednesday, January 14, 4 p.m. Seed Up Meet Up | Help us fill our seed packets for the seed library, hear from Superstition Master Gardeners, ask questions about your home garden, & learn about Earth Heart Park and Community Garden! *Topic: Composting*

Thursday, January 15, 5 - 7 p.m. Board Game Night | Ready for some social deduction? Ages 18+ are welcome to join us in playing games like Werewolf. Give your inner detective a chance to shine and see if you can deduce who's hiding something!

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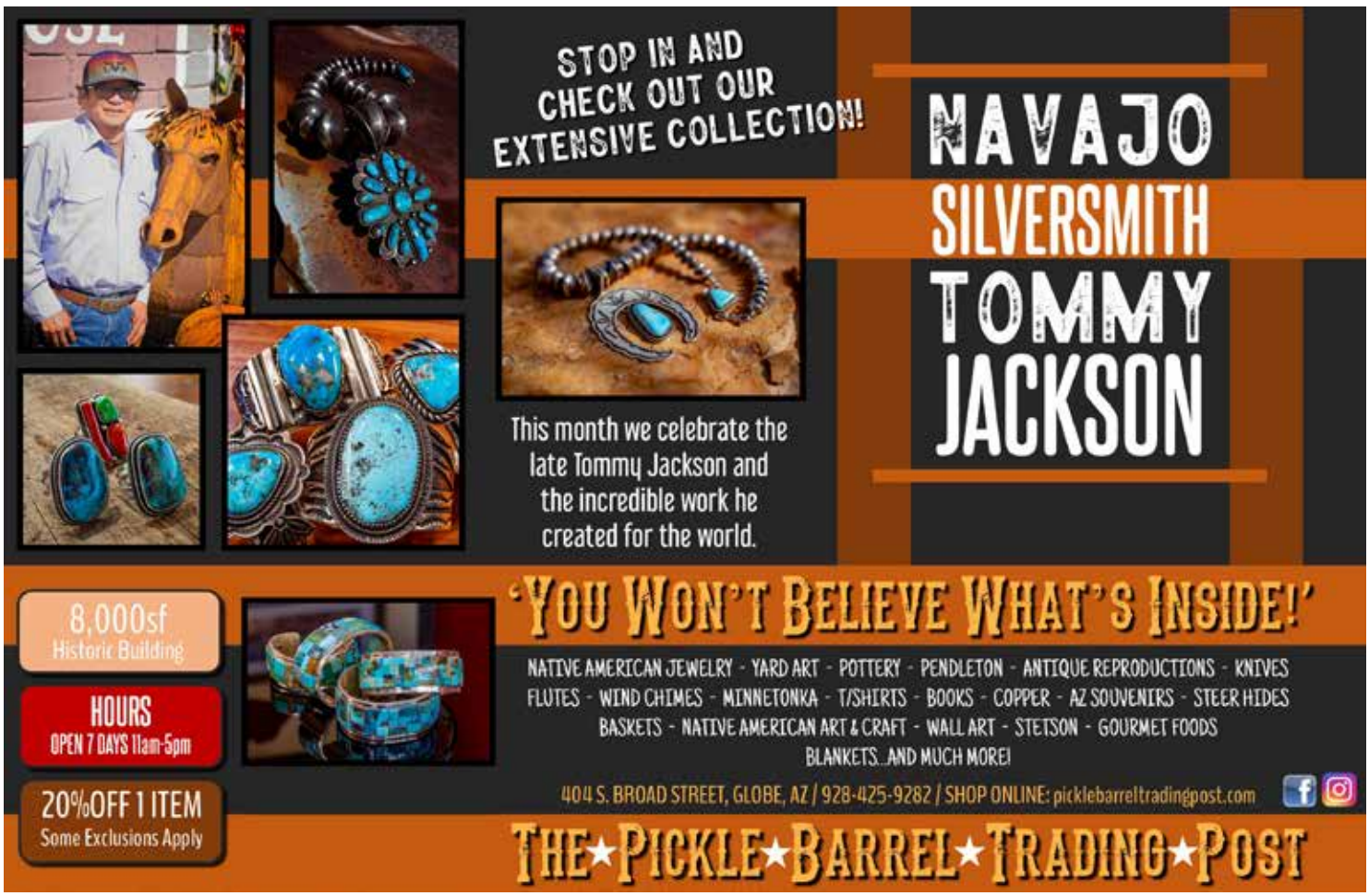
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Thursday, January 15, 6:30 p.m. Books & Brews | Rejoice! Books & Brews is continuing throughout the Spring season!

Join us at the Handlebar Pub & Grill in Apache Junction. Bring a book that fits the monthly genre or any you've enjoyed lately. Delight in discussion and libations on the pub's patio, plus 10% off your bill! Genre: A Book You're Buzzing About

Friday, January 16, 10 a.m. Breathe Again: Learning to Live After Loss | Are you grieving a loss? Would you like a safe place to discuss your grief? A chance to meet new people and be with others who understand? Join us for a monthly bereavement group hosted by Barbara King, R.N., Executive Director of Supportive Hands Hospice. Free and open to adults.

Thursday, November 20, 5 - 7 p.m. Board Game Night | Ready for some social deduction? Ages 18+ are welcome to join us in playing games like Werewolf. Give your inner detective a chance to shine and see if you can deduce who's hiding something!

Saturday, January 17, 10 – 11 a.m. Healing Circle | What is a Healing Circle? A group of people who join together to learn tools to activate their healing capabilities. Our body, mind, and Spirit are designed to heal. We learn how to tap into that healing ability that is already within us. We will learn and practice tools to turn on our internal healing processes. We will shift our energy, awareness, and alignment to bring our body into balance and harmony.

Wednesday, January 21, 3:00 p.m. Biblio Bites Demo – Homemade Hummus | Learn how to transform the humble chickpea into a hearty, healthy Middle Eastern dip: hummus. No booking required! Watch our demo and checkout from our wide variety of cookbooks, with samples available too.

All attendees will also be entered in a drawing to win a free food processor! Generously donated by ArchWell Health in Apache Junction.

Thursday, January 22, 5-7 p.m. Hobby Swap | Bring your extra craft supplies, scraps, odds and ends, and take new items home! Bring your items anytime between 5-7 PM and then peruse what others have brought. Items left over at the end of the night will be donated to a local thrift store.

Thursday, January 29, 5:30 p.m. Dungeons & Dragons | Players new and experienced can come play this fun 1 shot game!

Tuesday, January 20, 1:30-2:30 p.m. Dying For A Mystery Book Club– An Echo In Time by Boo Walker

Tuesday, January 27, 1:30-2:30 p.m. Classic Book Club– Their Eyes Were Watching God by Zora Neale Hurston

THE LOST DUTCHMAN RACES RETURN

25TH ANNUAL LOST DUTCHMAN RACES RETURN TO APACHE JUNCTION IN FEBRUARY

Non-profit Events to Reach $1M in Cumulative Donations to Local Youth Organizations

by Rick Hardina

The 25th annual Lost Dutchman Marathon, Half Marathon, 10K, and 8K Trail Run will return to Apache Junction and Gold Canyon on Sunday, February 15th. A 2-mile Fun Run will take place in Apache Junction at the Multigenerational Center on Saturday, February 14th. Runners are welcome to participate in the 26.2 mile marathon, while walkers and runners may register for any of the shorter distances.

All proceeds from the five non-profit Lost Dutchman race events will benefit several local youth groups and organizations. By the completion of this years 25th annual events, the Lost Dutchman Races will have reached a cumulative total of more than $1M in non-profit donations.

Start line for the 26.2 mile marathon will be at the Lost Goldmine Trail East in Gold Canyon. The marathon will wind its way through Gold Canyon and then proceeds along scenic back roads to the finish line in Prospector Park in Apache Junction. The shorter races originate from and return to Prospector Park in Apache Junction.

All race registrants receive post-race refreshments and a long-sleeved Lost Dutchman T-shirt. In addition, all finishers in the Marathon, Half Marathon, 10K, and 8K Trail Run will receive a colorful high-quality finisher medal.

Those interested in participating in any of the events may register on the Lost Dutchman Marathon website: www.lostdutchmanmarathon.org.

In addition, all readers of Superstition Living may enter the code SUP10LDM when registering online in order to receive a 10% discount off of any race distance selected.

CANYON SOUNDS PERFORMANCE SERIES

THE FACE VOCAL BAND

Date: Friday, February 20, 2026 at 7 pm
Venue: Gold Canyon United Methodist Church
6640 S Kings Ranch Road, Gold Canyon, AZ 85118

By: Chuck Cuffaro, GCAC Publicity

Get ready for a spectacular show with this all-vocal rock group from Boulder, Colorado. They blend modern music with complex harmonies, vocal percussion, and brilliant a cappella singing. They create their own "wall of sound" without instruments and a repertoire which may include a Queen Medley, songs from Woodstock, and many rock/folk favorites.

The band has led off for Jon Bon Jovi and won numerous awards at the National Finals of Harmony A Cappella Festival, and Favorite Pop/Rock Group at the Contemporary A Cappella Society's Community Awards. They have toured internationally performing in Scotland, England, Sweden, Australia, and of course, they are a favorite of local Colorado fans having performed at the Red Rocks Amphitheatre.

Ticket prices are $35 and may be purchased online at www.goldcanyonarts.org or at the following locations:

- Robin Rotella Real Estate Team,
  6641 S. Kings Ranch Rd, 85118 (Credit Card, Check or Cash)
- AJ Chamber of Commerce,
  567 W. Apache Trail, 85120 (Cash only)

The Gold Canyon Arts Council's non-profit mission is Arts Education for students, providing in-school concerts, musical instruments and lessons, visual arts instruction, and school supplies.

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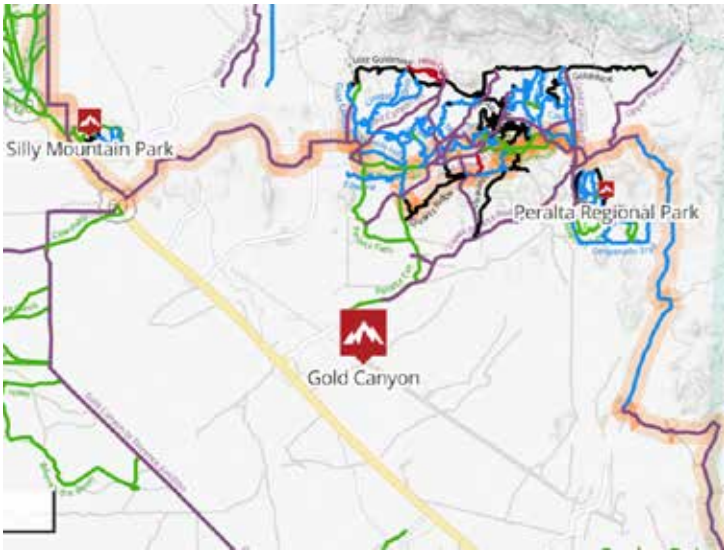

EYES ON THE FUTURE

FROM GOLD CANYON COMMUNITY, INC.

Jerry Stevenson, President, GCCI

GCCI hosted its year-end HOA Summit in November at Tressa's Theatre on Kings Ranch Rd. Neighborhood and business leaders, civic service representatives, and Pinal County officials joined together for updates and discussion of major issues which impact our community.

Fire Chief John Whitney outlined the 2026 Superstition Fire & Medical District plan and noted that the department will end the current year with over 9,000 incident response calls and an average response time of only 4.38 minutes. Jim Maxwell of MountainBrook Village updated his neighborhood's extensive progress in fire safety, joining Superstition Mountain Country Club and Superstition Foothills as a Firewise community.

Pinal County Supervisor Jeff Serdy discussed three planned/potential developments in the surrounding area: the Silver King Solar Farm (he opposes) in the Florence Junction elbow; Resolution Copper's pending bid for a manufacturing location in the same area for slurry evaporation beds; and a Castelion hypersonic missile manufacturing & testing (internal) facility proposal expected to soon hit his desk.

GCCI board member Isabelle Petersen noted the ongoing success of her Dark Skies initiative being integrated into the Pinal County revised codes. She reiterated that the goal is "glow vs. glare," using warm, shielded light to avoid harmful light pollution.

Pinal County engineer Chris Wanamaker announced that traffic safety and flooding issues at the Maverik/Walgreens intersection will be remedied in early 2026. Maverik's opening date depends on final authorization by the County.

Michael McCarty, HOA president of Superstition Mountain Country Club, reported that ADOT's design for a second

SONORAN DESERT LANDSCAPES

TOM MCDONALD
OWNER - SMILING DOG LANDSCAPES

FOUNTAIN GRASS

AKA PENNISETUM SETACEUM (UGH!)

On New Year's Day, long-standing tradition is to set resolutions for improvement. In 2015, I resolved to educate our community about a non-native grass that is taking over across the west and, most definitely, right here in our beloved Sonoran Desert.

Fountain grass, a native of Africa and the Middle East, has been widely used in the landscape industry as a beautiful, ornamental specimen plant. Indeed, its eye-catching purple form and texture provide a pleasant contrast with other plant types as well as natural and structural materials. Further, it is remarkably bullet proof, an always popular trait in landscape plants, but there's the rub, the dark side of that beauty.

Not only has *pennisetum setaceum* taken over our roadsides and common areas, it is now one of the top invasive species in the riparian areas of our Superstition Mountains. A poor pasture grass, it is eaten only as a last resort by cattle. Worse, it is a highly aggressive, fire adapted species that easily out-competes native plants. Due to its quick growth, it creates more biomass than most of our native plants, thus raising the fuel load and creating a hotter wildfire than the native can withstand, including the mighty Saguaro and ubiquitous mesquite.

Only eight years ago, a few hundred fountain grass clumps could be seen along the north side of Don Donnelly Drive in Gold Canyon, Now, thousands upon thousands of this pest have spread north. Hog Canyon, as well as many other washes in the Superstitions are overrun by fountain grass.

Eradication is difficult, but not impossible. The Friends of the Tonto is a group of volunteers who assist the managers of the Tonto National in eradicating invasive species, among other things.

One thing we can do now, as homeowners, is to keep it out of our own landscapes. The seed of this grass is effortlessly spread by the wind, easily finding a home next to the drip irrigation for your beautiful lantana or hibiscus. If spotted early, the young plants can be easily pulled. Once established, however, it takes an act of congress, plus a whole lot of sweat and muscle, to remove them. Vigilance is crucial as seeds can last seven years in the soil and still be viable. Awareness of the problem is perhaps our best strategy to slow the spread of this invasive plant.

So this New Year's Day, why not jot a little side note to your list of resolutions and help me improve our desert. Let's eradicate fountain grass! *E-mail friendsofthetontonf@gmail.com for more information.*

25TH ANNUAL GOLD CANYON ARTS FESTIVAL

Saturday, January 24, 2026 from 9am to 4pm

Join us at the 25th annual Gold Canyon Arts Festival, nestled in the beautiful Superstition Mountains, on the grounds of the GC United Methodist Church at 6640 S. Kings Ranch Road in Gold Canyon, AZ. The festival is a gift to the community and features no admission fee and free parking. Please, no dogs or skateboards.

An average of 4,500 people/year attend and exhibitors call it the best one-day festival in the region. The juried art show will feature 95 artists in a wide variety of genres and styles. Programs will be available listing the artists, their specialties, and booth locations.

All day live musical performances will include the following groups:

- **Agape Brass Quintet:** This group will begin the festival with a Salute to America music.
- **The Hot Beignets:** New Orleans style music, making every day, Mardi Gras Day.
- **The Local Spirits**: Instrumental group playing rock, bluegrass, country, and world music.

A Food Court will offer a variety of foods and specialty beverages which include: Native American selections, barbeque, hamburgers, hotdogs, and a sweets truck.

As a non-profit, the Gold Canyon Art Council's mission is Performing and Visual Arts Education at regional schools. We also donate musical instruments, music lessons, and school supplies.

HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM THE GOLD CANYON GARDEN CLUB!

Our first meeting of 2026 will be held on Tuesday, January 6th. We are excited to welcome Lavier Kurtz, Master Gardener and Garden Coordinator at Earth Heart Park & Community Garden in Apache Junction. His presentation, "The Power of Volunteering in a Community Garden," will highlight the impact that dedicated volunteers can make.

Doors open at 9:30 AM for socializing, and the meeting will run from 10:00 AM to 12:00 Noon.

Blue Star Memorial Highway Marker Dedication

The dedication of the Blue Star Memorial Highway marker at the Silly Mountain Ramada was held at 11:00 AM on a beautiful November 14th morning. We were honored to have Apache Junction city leaders and the American Legion Post 27 Color Guard join members of the Gold Canyon Garden Club for this meaningful event.

Next time you visit Silly Mountain, be sure to look for the beautiful Blue Star Memorial Marker, proudly mounted on a natural boulder.

Visit Our Butterfly Garden

Our Butterfly Garden now features a raised flower bed designed to protect plants from local critters. The garden is located on Alameda, just west of the Gold Canyon Community Church, at the far west end of the Dinosaur Mountain playground parking area.

Stop by anytime to see what grows in the cool January desert!

About Our Club: The Gold Canyon Garden Club meets on the first Tuesday of the month, September through May. We begin gathering at 9:30 AM, with our presentation and meeting held from 10:00 AM to 12:00 Noon.

Location: Gold Canyon United Methodist Church – Mission Center. 8830 E. Sunrise Drive, Gold Canyon

If you are interested in gardening, we would love for you to join us! Contact: goldcanyongarden@gmail.com

IN THE KITCHEN
WITH MARSHA

MARSHADORRIS

Italian Chicken Patties

Fast and easy to make for dinner or as an appetizer!

INGREDIENTS:

- ½ cup Mozzarella cheese (shredded)
- 1/8 cup Grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/8 cup Blanched Almond Flour
- 1 large Egg
- ½ Tbsp Italian seasoning
- ¼ tsp Garlic powder
- ¼ tsp Onion powder
- ½ tsp Sea salt (or to taste)
- 1/8 tsp black pepper
- 2 tbsp Olive oil (divided into 1 tbsp and 2 tbsp, plus more if needed)
- 1 lb Ground Chicken

INSTRUCTIONS:

In large bowl, stir together the cheeses, almond flour, egg, Italian seasoning, garlic powder, onion powder, salt, pepper and ½ tablespoon of Olive Oil. Add the ground chicken. Mix just until combined. (Don't over-mix).

Divide the chicken into 8 small patties, about 3/8" thick. After forming them, place them on a piece of parchment paper lined cutting board and cut the paper into a square around each patty, so you can easily lift them one by one. Heat 2 Tbls of olive oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat for about 2 minutes, until the oil shimmers. Once hot, add the chicken patties in a single layer. It's easiest to pick them up with parchment paper and flip over in the pan, then quickly peel off the paper. Fry 3-4 minutes per side, until golden brown and cooked through. Repeat with the remaining chicken mixture (use the last tablespoon of olive oil here), until all your chicken patties are done.

Let the patties rest for 5-10 minutes before serving. I served them with Marinara sauce on the side, or you can eat them as is.

Compliments of Wholesome Yum – Easy healthy recipes

Any questions or comments please contact Marsha at Marsha.Dorris.Realtor@gmail.com

HEALING NATURALLY

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A RETURN TO SAFETY

Happy New Year and welcome to the first in my article series, *"Children of the Chakras: A Return to Self-Love"*!

Inside each of us are aspects of ourselves—children, if you will—that are seeking to be heard, loved, and acknowledged. As we allow fears and doubts to come to the surface without self-judgment, we release the suppressed energy that may be stopping us from the physical and emotional healing we need.

In these articles I'll explain about the seven chakras, or energy centers, and how they relate to our physical bodies. I'll suggest how to work with *your* "children of the chakras" to identify the roots of dense energy that wants to be released and share simple techniques to clear negative energy and start the healing process.

Now let's get started with our introduction to the first, or root, chakra. The *spiritual truth* associated with this chakra is, "I am safe, I am supported, I belong."

The first chakra is located at the base of the spine. Corresponding body parts are the spine, skeleton, legs, and immune system. The spine and skeleton can represent support and structure in our lives. Possible physical conditions from dense energy in the 1st chakra could be spinal misalignment such as scoliosis and kyphosis. There may be problems with the legs and feet that literally carry us forward in life.

One patient told me she was having terrible foot pain and had been to several doctors without results. During our interview, Alice told me that her mother blamed her for many of her own problems and she felt she was always judging and criticizing her. As I listened to her, she allowed suppressed emotions to surface and recognized the self-judgment that she needed to release. I suggested some affirmations that she could use: "I belong. My husband and children love and support me. I trust in the Divine presence in my life. Life unfolds in perfect ways and with perfect timing."

A few weeks later Alice was amazed at how much better she felt and that she was walking with almost no pain. Part of her healing process was that she realized she needed to release aspects of the relationship with her mother so she could move forward in life.

When my root chakra energy is flowing, the thoughts and emotions associated with it would be based in *trust* that I am supported in life and that I can move forward through life's changes with grace and ease. If the first chakra energy is not flowing, I may feel abandoned and fear change, not wanting to move forward in life because I don't feel safe and supported, and that I don't belong.

So how did we lose touch with that spiritual truth? It may have been from instability in our home environment when we were growing up. Perhaps we felt a lack of emotional support as children. Sometimes frequent moves as a child or having our parents divorce may make us feel that we aren't safe with changes. Often this manifests in adults as a need to control the details of our lives and even control the lives of others around us to feel safe.

Talk with your inner child. Does she believe the spiritual truth, "I am safe. I am supported. I am loved"? What secrets can she reveal to you? What fears or emotions surface as you reflect on these things? Acknowledge them without self-judgment and let yourself feel them.

Make a list of people you trust and feel safe with and thank them for their support. Write affirmations like the ones I mentioned in Alice's case and repeat them to yourself often.

The *color* that supports us to balance our first chakra is red. When I wear red, it reminds me that divine life supports me. Essential oils that support our 1st chakra are earthy smells such as sandalwood, cedarwood, cinnamon, and ginger clove.

Emotions are held at a cellular level, so when you **feel** emotions, you release them from your body and heal. Gardening or hiking are good ways to get in touch with our bodies and nature. An excellent tool to release suppressed emotions is the power of water. Have a good cry in the shower or bath and release those thoughts and emotions you've been holding back for so long.

Next time we'll talk about the second chakra and how it relates to your creativity!

REAL ESTATE FOR YOU

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The Science Behind Why Certain Homes Feel More Welcoming

Some homes make people feel comfortable the moment they walk through the door. Even without saying a word, space communicates warmth, calmness, and connection. There is real science behind this reaction and understanding it can help sellers create a more appealing experience for potential buyers.

THE POWER OF FIRST IMPRESSIONS

People form opinions within seconds. A clean entryway, clear pathways, and simple decor help the brain process information more easily. When the mind feels at ease, space feels more inviting. Clutter, on the other hand, increases mental load and can make a home feel smaller or less comfortable.

THE ROLE OF LIGHTING AND COLOR

Light plays a major role in how the brain interprets space. Natural light sends signals that boost positive feelings and a sense of calm. Soft, warm lighting in the evening creates comfort and relaxation. Color also triggers emotional responses. Neutral tones help buyers feel grounded, while soft accent colors add interest without overwhelming the senses.

HOW SCENT AND SOUND INFLUENCE MOOD

Smell is directly connected to the emotional center of the brain. Light, clean scents such as soft vanilla or fresh citrus can make a space feel peaceful and pleasant. Sound also matters. Gentle background music creates rhythm and flow, helping visitors slow down and feel more comfortable as they explore the home.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BALANCE AND LAYOUT

Homes that feel welcoming often have balanced layouts. Furniture that is spaced appropriately, open walkways, and rooms arranged with purpose help the brain feel oriented. When people can move through a home easily, they naturally feel more relaxed and open to imagining themselves living there.

A welcoming home connects with both the senses and the emotions. By focusing on light, color, scent, sound, and thoughtful layout, sellers can create an environment where buyers feel comfortable, calm, and ready to picture their future inside the home.

SIEV Hosts 3rd Annual Wine Tasting Fundraiser January 31 in Gold Canyon

Soroptimist International of the East Valley (SIEV) will host its 3rd Annual Wine Tasting Fundraiser on Saturday, January 31, 2026, from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at 6021 S Kings Ranch Rd, Gold Canyon, AZ 85118. The community is invited to enjoy an evening of fine wine, great company, and exciting prizes—all in support of SIEV's mission to empower women and girls.

This year's event once again features Wine For Humanity, a nonprofit partner dedicated to providing high-quality wines while supporting charitable causes. Guests will have the opportunity to sample a selection of new wines debuting this year, making it a fresh experience for newcomers and returning attendees alike.

Alongside the tasting, the fundraiser will include a 50/50 raffle and door prizes, offering fun ways to get involved while helping raise funds for SIEV's programs, scholarships, and community service efforts.

Tickets are available now at: https://givebutter.com/LfvMUj

SIEV encourages residents of the East Valley and surrounding communities to come out, raise a glass, and support their ongoing mission to improve the lives of women and girls through education, mentorship, and local impact initiatives. Cheers to another wonderful year of community generosity and connection!

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PRACTICE THE PAUSE: Achieve Your Best Life

Each January, countless individuals introduce resolutions or intentions aimed at significantly improving their lives. However, many of these commitments - such as “get fit,” “save money,” or “be more mindful” - often fail by being too vague or unrealistic. What if we could focus on micro-goals: real, achievable actions that lead to improved results and naturally fit into everyday life. Imagine what might happen if we choose to introduce the ‘Practicing the Pause’ in 2026.

‘Practicing the Pause’ means deliberately stopping for a moment before reacting, speaking, or deciding. It is the conscious choice to create space between stimulus and response. This pause may be as short as a deep breath or a count to three, but its impact is profound. By integrating pauses into our daily lives, we open the door to calmer minds, stronger relationships, wiser decisions, and ultimately, our best life.

Mentally and emotionally, the pause acts as a buffer against stress. When faced with frustration or anxiety, our default is often to react impulsively snapping at someone, rushing decisions, or falling into worry. Taking a moment to pause interrupts this automatic cycle. A single breath can lower tension and bring clarity. With practice, this habit builds resilience, helping you respond thoughtfully rather than out of impulse. Over time, you become anchored in calmness, better able to navigate life’s challenges with poise and control.

The impact of pausing is especially noticeable in conversations. Communication isn’t just about speaking; it’s about truly listening and responding with care. We often rush to fill silences or interrupt before others finish. Pausing gives us the chance to listen fully, preventing misunderstandings and allowing us to choose our words carefully. Demonstrating respect for another individual’s viewpoint is equally important. In this way, practicing the pause turns hurried exchanges into meaningful connections.

In the workplace, pausing is essential. The fast pace and constant demands of modern work can lead to errors and miscommunication. Taking a moment before acting helps us to review emails, make thoughtful decisions, and spark creativity. Leaders who pause demonstrate calmness and authority, inspiring confidence in their teams. Ultimately, strategic pauses result in better workplace outcomes and a healthier professional environment.

Pausing also benefits daily routines. Taking a moment before eating can enhance enjoyment and prevent overeating. Brief pauses while driving promote safety and prevent accidents. Pausing before reaching for a phone or snack interrupts automatic habits and allows for better choices. Over time, these small moments accumulate, gradually shifting routines and encouraging mindfulness in everyday activities.

Perhaps the greatest value of practicing the pause is that it helps us savor life’s moments. In a culture obsessed with speed and productivity, we often rush past what matters most. Pausing encourages us to slow down, notice beauty, and appreciate experiences. It gives us the space to act with intention, aligning our choices with our values and the life we truly want.

The beauty of practicing the pause lies in its simplicity. It can be integrated seamlessly into daily life. One might count to three before responding in conversation, taking a single deep breath before making any decisions. Even five to ten seconds of pause can shift mindset and behavior. Gradually, these small acts build into a powerful habit that influences every aspect of life.

Of course, practicing the pause is not always easy. Silence can feel uncomfortable, and pausing may seem like wasting time. Yet the opposite is true. Pausing enhances effectiveness by ensuring that actions are deliberate rather than reactive. It is a discipline that requires patience, but the rewards are immense. With practice, the pause becomes second nature, woven into the rhythm of daily life.

As we step into 2026, resolutions and intentions do not need to be grand or unattainable. They can be as simple as committing to pause. Imagine the ripple effects: calmer minds, richer conversations, wiser decisions, safer habits, and a deeper sense of fulfillment. Practicing the pause is a micro-goal that touches every dimension of life. It is achievable, sustainable, and transformative. Most importantly, it allows us to live our best life—one marked by clarity, respect, and intention.

A JOURNEY

By Marcia Nelson

In the beginning,
there was adventure for the making,
cap guns and Lincoln Logs,
free time for the taking.
Endless days
in the Summers bright light.
But organized days
loomed just out of sight.

And the seasons marched ahead
as they always do.
Time was accounted for
right on cue.
Schedules were followed
and protocol ruled.
Would the time that I have left
be forever schooled?

But looking back I can see
that life has a way
of focusing it's light
on what's needed today.
So enjoy this day's journey
and you'll see that bright light
has turned golden on the horizon.
What a beautiful sight!

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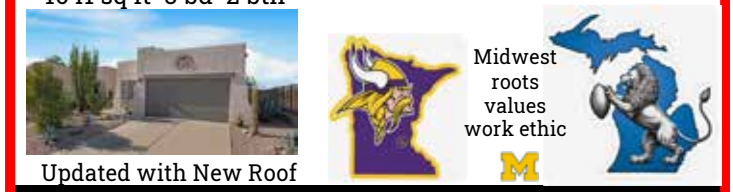

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2026 SMM SEASON EVENTS

We have an exciting season of events planned filled with activities for all ages -- from fundraisers to family activities; from boutiques to festivals; from the Four Peaks Amethyst Trunk Show to celebrating Charro! There will be something for everyone. Be sure to mark your calendars as you will not want to miss out on the fun!

- **January 17, 2026 |** Desert Delights Family Day: PicasZoo, Wagging Tails and Safe Trails Workshop
- **February 6-8, 2026 |** Four Peaks Amethyst Trunk Show
- **February 7, 2026 |** Kurt Cavano -- History of the Four Peaks Amethyst Mine, Four Peaks Paired with Four Peaks Beer and Brat Picnic Fundraiser
- **February 21, 2026 |** Desert Delights Family Day: Danger Noodles! Desert Wildlife & Safety with Phoenix Herpetological Society & Sanctuary
- **March 8, 2026 |** Cheers to Charro! Day
- **March 20-22, 2026 |** Magic of Mexican Artistry Festival
- **March 21, 2026 |** Desert Delights Family Day: Birds of Prey with Liberty Wildlife
- **March 28, 2026 |** Mountains & Mimosas Fundraiser Brunch

2026 "LEGENDS AND LORE OF THE SUPERSTITIONS AND MORE" LECTURE SERIES

Our annual free lecture series occurs every Thursday afternoon at 2 p.m. Presentations with a * indicate the presentation will take place in the Apacheland Barn all other presentations will occur in the outdoor amphitheater.

- **January 8 –** The Lost Dutchman and his Mine – Teton Ken
- **January 15 –** Uncovering Archaeological Sites – Dan Garcia
- **January 22 –** The Arizona Rangers – Steve Utter
- **January 29 –** Beneath the Surface: Investigating the Memory of Arizona's Miners and the Mining Boom Towns – Trevor Malley *
- **February 5 –** Debating the Origins: Uncovering the Forgotten History of Horses in Arizona – Dr. John Mack
- **February 12 –** Gold Under the Dutchman's Bed – Larry Hedrick *
- **February 19 –** From Friendship to Gratitude -- The Merci Train Collection – Carissa Whiting *
- **February 26 –** Phoenix Shall Rise Like the Famous Bird: The Jack Swilling Legacy – Steve Shumacher
- **March 5 –** Sonoran Desert Animals – James Shepherd *
- **March 12 – To Be Announced**
- **March 19 –** Welcome to Arizona Territory Mr. President -- President Theodore Roosevelt
- **March 26 –** The Lost Dutchman – Wayne Tuttle

All Superstition Mountain Museum programs and presentations are subject to change. For current info, visit www.SMLDM.org

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NEW YEAR'S FINANCIAL RESOLUTIONS: MAKING THEM STICK

As the calendar flips to a new year, millions of Americans pledge to improve their financial lives. But without a concrete plan, those well-intentioned resolutions often fade quickly.

Financial goals consistently top the list of New Year's resolutions. A 2025 CFP Board study shows that financial resolutions are prominent, with saving more money (45%) and reducing debt (32%) ranking among the top three goals.

Unfortunately, most resolutions don't last. A 2023 Forbes Health poll found that over half of people give up on resolutions by the four-month mark and only 1% make it the full year.

The challenge isn't a lack of desire for change. People may set the same resolution year after year, revealing a disconnect between intentions and action. Or it may be that they try to tackle too many goals at once, or aim higher than is realistic, setting themselves up for disappointment.

SET SMART FINANCIAL GOALS. Before crafting your action plan, consider which financial priorities matter most to you. If you need ideas, here are some areas where you may want focus in 2026:

- Regularly review your financial goals and track progress toward meeting them
- Increase your 401(k) contributions or max out your IRA and/or HSA contributions
- Pay down debt strategically and negotiate lower interest payments
- Build an emergency savings fund of six to 12 months
- Save more consistently

BE SPECIFIC. Vague resolutions like "save more money" rarely succeed. Instead, it can help to make goals specific and measurable. For example, rather than making a resolution to "start an emergency fund," commit to a specific goal, such as, "I will put $100 a month into an emergency fund."

This shift from general to specific transforms wishful thinking into actionable steps. When goals are attainable, it's easier to track progress and stay motivated.

FIND AN ACCOUNTABILITY PARTNER. Don't go it alone. Having someone to check in with can help you stay on track. This could be a spouse, friend or family member who shares similar goals.

Consider working with a financial advisor who can help you create a realistic plan, monitor your progress and adjust strategies as needed. A professional can provide expertise and accountability, making it easier to stay on track throughout the year.

START SMALL AND BUILD MOMENTUM. Rather than overhauling your entire financial life all at once, focus on one or two priority areas. Identify where the largest gap exists between your current situation and where you want to be, then concentrate your energy there.

Breaking larger goals into smaller, manageable actions makes them less overwhelming and more achievable. Each small win builds confidence and momentum for tackling the next challenge.

The new year offers a fresh start and renewed motivation to improve your financial health. With specific goals, a solid action plan and the right support system, this could be the year your financial resolutions finally stick.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. — Edward Jones, Member SIPC.

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Within the private guarded gate community, Superstition Mountain, this elevated golf course lot encompasses the best of all worlds. The award-winning architecture thoughtfully takes advantage of Superstition Mountain -Flat Iron, golf course and city light views. Towering glass front to back brings this South-west Contemporary estate to life. All amenities included, truly turn-key and due for completion in December of 2026.

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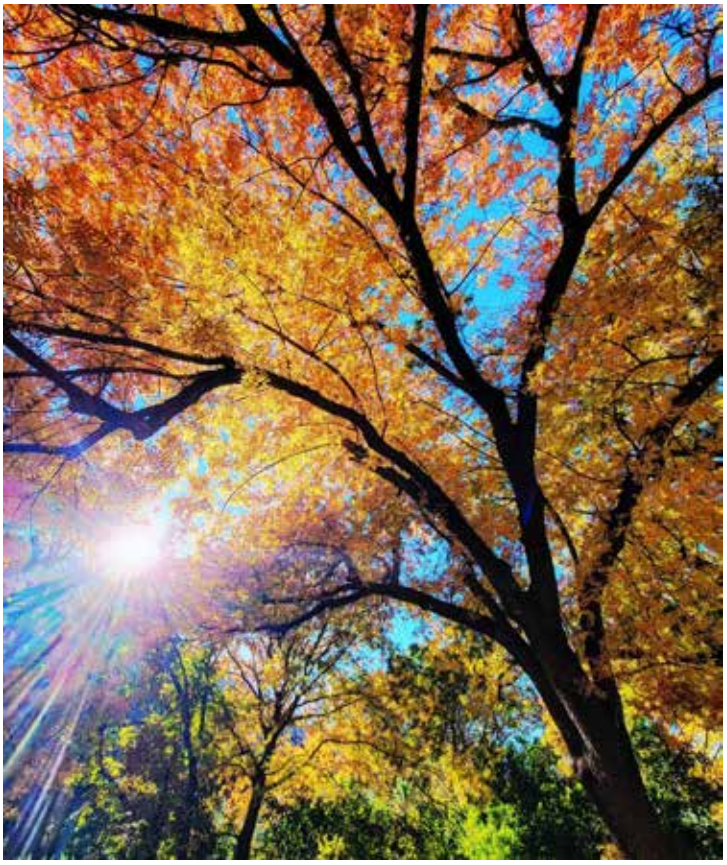
PHOTOGRAPHY FROM AROUND THE AREA

We want to highlight **YOUR PHOTOS**! Email them to *editor@mansurdesign.com.* *LIMIT 2 PHOTOS PER PERSON.*

Morning sunrise Moon by Thomas E Jones

Coyote, Gold Canyon desert wash by Carrie McNamara

Superstition Sunrise by Fynley Broderick



Fall foliage at Boyce Thompson Arboretum by Stephanie Wiltz

Bald Eagle By Lisa Alopogianis

Photo By Jane Benner

Cloaked Superstition By Kara

Thanksgiving Sunrise by Neil Brogren

Love the clouds By Kathy Kelley

Reflections on Saguaro Lake by Pat Smith

Bee on Graham's Nipple Cactus by Gordon Cox

Coyote posing by Thomas E Jones

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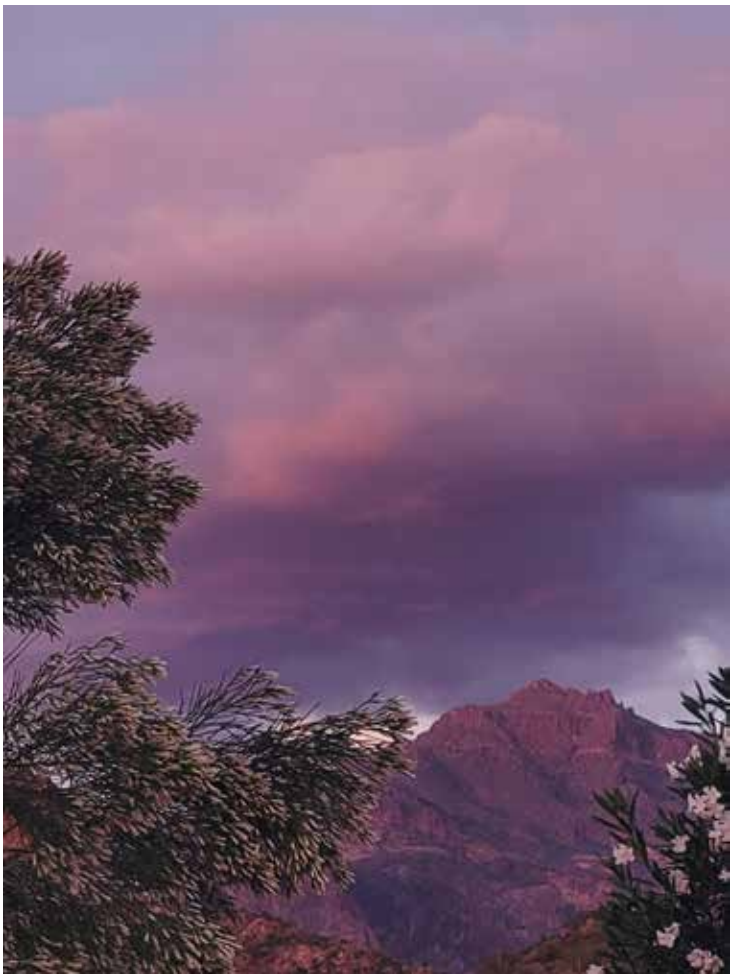

Purple Haze of Evening Showers By Lyn Kibbett

Great horned owl By Lisa Alopogianis

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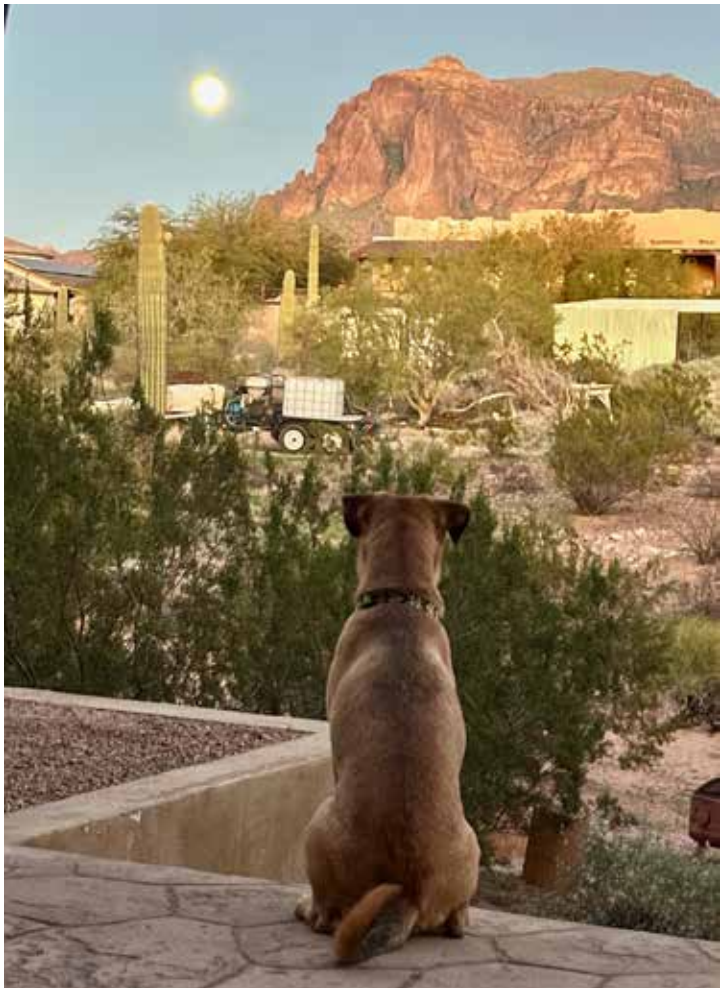

Moon doggie by Cathy Harper

Snowy Superstition Mountains, by Carrie McNamara

The Grinch at AJ light parade by Jen Rosentreter

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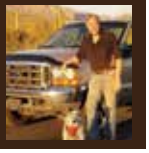

Weavers Needle by Tammy Keyes

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